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Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP)

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PRESS RELEASE

ON THE FARCE OF AN ELECTION IN ETHIOPIA

If it was not so tragic we would have gloated with a well deserved "we told you so" and hailed the end of the illusion of a multi democracy governance (however limited) in Ethiopia. The May 23 general election in Ethiopia really brought no surprises--we had said the EPRDF will win hands down (it did), we had said it will rig the election (it committed fraud in broad daylight), we had called on the people to boycott the whole charade (they refused to register and to vote en masse as they did in 2005). The claim that 29 million people registered and voted is one more EPRDF lie that knows no restraint or shame. That the African Union observers claimed the election was fair and free was also expected as this body has shamed itself so many times that it has no connection whatsoever with the reality of millions of Africans.

The EPRP has persistently stated that there can be no free and fair election under the totalitarian and ethnic chauvinist rule of the Tigrean front (TPLF) that hides behind the EPRDF appellation. This conclusion stemmed from a thorough knowledge of the TPLF which for years took Albania of Enver Hoxha as its model and sang eulogies of Stalin and from direct experience since it came to power. Five years ago in 2005, the ruling Front was resoundingly defeated in a general election but it decreed a state of emergency, killed more than 200 peaceful protesters, jailed more than 50,000, negated the results and imposed itself in power using its control of the repression machinery. Some mild cries of disapproval were heard from the EU and the West but business as usual continued and the dictator was even feted by the likes of Tony Blair in international conferences. That a similar outcome would follow is expected also this time as some of the statements issued in the last few days are meek and mild and just routine and the repressive EPRDF will enjoy its openly declared one party rule with no rejection from its donors. The 2005 experience proved that no free and fair election would ever take place under the rule of the TPLF/EPRDF and this why the EPRP called for a boycott of the election so that the farce can be exposed and the TPLF forced to run against itself and win a landslide as it

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in a country where there is no independent electoral commission or judiciary is an exercise in futility, a naivety that Ethiopia can ill afford. It is also futile to expect foreign powers would effectively condemn and pressurize a regime that may slaughter Ethiopians but they say no matter what they need in order to pursue their own missions in the vital region of the Horn and Africa as a whole.

Ethiopian opposition forces need to draw the appropriate lesson of the May 23 farce and close ranks for the decisive struggle to end the rule of the Tigrean chauvinist clique in power. The Ethiopian people have said enough with the election fraud and expect their defenders to rally them for the meaningful struggle that the ruling front can understand in a real sense. The EPRP had been calling for such a struggle for years and once again it calls upon all Ethiopian forces to end the farce and to rally for the popular struggle for democracy and against the totalitarian ethnic dictatorship. The one party rule has bared its fangs and is now openly on the throne. The mask is off, the farce has ended. It is time to rise up against tyranny. This is the stand and the message of the EPRP.

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